AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. **(Previously Presented)** A method for providing a fibre-containing pectin product from a plant material, said method comprising the steps of:

(i) providing an *in situ* reaction system by swelling the plant material in an aqueous solution, wherein said aqueous solution comprises at least one salt;

(ii) subjecting pectin present in the swollen plant material from step (i) to a de-esterification treatment in the presence of an alkaline reagent; and

(iii) separating the de-esterified fibre-containing pectin product.

2. **(Original)** The method according to claim 1, wherein the aqueous solution does not contain an organic solvent.

3. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 1, wherein the plant material is swelled in the aqueous solution for 1 to 120 minutes.

4. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 1, wherein the plant material is swelled in the aqueous solution at a temperature in the range of 0-120°C.

5. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 1, wherein the plant material is swelled in the aqueous solution providing a dry matter content of the plant material in a range from 1-50%.

6. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 1, wherein the amount of the at least one salt corresponds to a salt concentration from 1 mmol to 30 mmol per gram of plant material dry matter.

7. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 1, wherein the aqueous solution is an inorganic aqueous solution.

8. **(Currently amended)** The method according to claim 1, wherein the at least one salt is a water- soluble ~~and~~ or neutral salt.

9. **(Currently amended)** The method according to claim 8, wherein the water-soluble ~~and/or~~ or neutral salt is selected from the group consisting of sodium salts, potassium salts, calcium salts, chloride salts, and nitrate salts ~~and~~ or mixtures thereof.

10. **(Currently amended)** The method according to ~~any one of claims 1-9 claim 1~~ claim 1, wherein the de-esterification treatment is continued for 1 to 120 minutes.

11. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 1, wherein the de-esterification treatment is performed at a temperature in the range of 0-120°C.

12. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 1, wherein the de-esterification treatment is performed with a dry matter content of the plant material in a range from 1-50%.

13. **(Canceled)**.

14. **(Currently Amended)** The method according to claim 1, wherein the alkaline reagent provided in step (ii) results in a pH ~~between 7 and 14~~ above 10.

15. **(Currently amended)** The method according to claim 1, wherein the alkaline reagent is selected from the group consisting of ammonia, a low molecular weight amine, ~~,~~ a low molecular weight diamine, a low molecular weight amino acid, sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, calcium hydroxide and an organic base hydroxide.

16. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 1, wherein the amount of alkaline reagent is from 20 mmol to 80 mmol of basic reagent per gram of pectin-containing plant dry matter.

17. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 1, wherein the plant material is further subjected to an amidation treatment.

18. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 17, wherein the amidation treatment comprises addition of an amidation reagent selected from the group consisting of ammonia, a low molecular weight amine, a low molecular weight diamine and a low molecular weight amino acid.

19. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 17, wherein the swollen plant material obtained in step (i) is treated with the amidation reagent for 1 to 120 minutes.

20. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 17, wherein the swollen plant material obtained in step (i) is treated with the amidation reagent at a temperature in the range of -15 to 75°C.

21. **(Currently amended)** The method according to claim 1, wherein the separated and de-esterified fibre-containing product obtained in step (iii) is subjected to at least one washing step ~~and/or~~ or at least one pressing step to obtain the fibre-containing pectin product.

22. **(Currently amended)** The method according to claim 21, wherein the washed ~~and/or~~ or pressed fibre-containing pectin product is dried to a dry matter content of at least 90% by weight.

23. **(Currently amended)** The method according to ~~any~~ claim 1, wherein the fibre-containing pectin product has a degree of esterification from 0-80°C.

24. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 1, wherein the fibre-containing pectin product has a degree of amidation of not more that 95%.

25. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 1, wherein the fibre-containing pectin product obtained in step (iii) has a dry matter content of at least 1% (w/w) of the dry matter.

26. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 1, wherein the plant material is obtained from a native vegetable material in a fresh or dried state.

27. **(Currently amended)** The method according to claim 1, wherein the plant material is selected from the group consisting of potato pulp, sugar beet pulp, pomace residues from apples, ~~and~~ peels ~~or pulp~~ from citrus fruits, and pulp from citrus fruits.

28. **(Previously Presented)** A fibre-containing pectin product produced by the method according to claim 1.

29. **(Previously Presented)** The product according to claim 28, wherein the fibre content present in the product is at least 1% (w/w) of the dry matter.

30. **(Previously Presented)** A method for providing a pectin product, said method comprising the steps of:

(i) providing a fibre-containing pectin product according to claim 28;

(ii) adding an extraction medium to the fibre- containing pectin product providing an extraction suspension;

(iii) adjusting the pH of the extraction suspension to a pH in the range of 1- 12;

(iv) adjusting the temperature of the extraction suspension to a temperature in the range of 0- 120°C; and

(v) isolating the pectin product from the aqueous phase of the extracting medium.

31. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 30, wherein the extraction medium has a pH in the range of 1-6.

32. **(Previously Presented)** The method according claim 30, wherein the temperature is in the range of 40-100°C.

33. **(Previously Presented)** The method according claim 30, wherein the pectin product is isolated by a method selected from the group consisting of precipitation, extraction, centrifugation, filtration, chromatography and drying.

34. **(Previously Presented)** A pectin product produced by the method according to claim 30.

35. **(Currently amended)** The product according to claim 34, wherein said product has a viscosity of at least 40 cp when mixed in a concentration of at most 1% (w/w) of pectin in a solution and measured by using a citric/citrate buffer and in a Hake Rheostress 1 viscosimeter, as defined in method A, ~~and/or~~ or has a viscosity, which is at least 2 times higher than the viscosity of conventional pectin products when mixed in a concentration of at most 1% (w/w) of pectin in a solution and measured by using a citric/citrate buffer and in a Hake Rheostress 1 viscosimeter, as defined in method A.

36. **(Previously Presented)** A product comprising pectin, wherein said product has a viscosity of at least 40 cp when mixed in a concentration of at most 1% (w/w) of pectin in a solution and measured by using a citric/citrate buffer and in a Hake Rheostress 1 viscosimeter as defined in method A, and/or has a viscosity which is at least 2 times higher than the viscosity of conventional pectin products when mixed in a concentration of at most 1% (w/w) of pectin in a solution and measured by using a citric/citrate buffer and in a Hake Rheostress 1 viscosimeter as defined in method A.

37. **(Previously Presented)** The product according to claim 36, wherein the product has a viscosity of at least 30 cp when mixed in a concentration of at most 1% (w/w) of pectin in a solution.

38. **(Previously Presented)** The product according to claim 36, wherein the product has a viscosity which is at least 2.5 times higher than conventional pectin products.

39. **(Currently amended)** The product according to ~~any one of claims 36-38 claim 36~~ claim 36, wherein the pectin has a degree of esterification from 0-80~~, such as from 0-50, e.g. from 2-50, such as from 2-45, e.g. from 2-40, such as from 5-50, e.g. from 10-50 and/or~~ or a degree of amidation of not more that 95% ~~e.g. not more than 75%, such as not more than 60%,~~

~~not more than 50%, such as not more than 40%, e.g. not more than 30%, such as not more than 25%, e.g. not more than 20%.~~

40. **(Previously Presented)** A method for encapsulating an easily volatile lipid, water- soluble aromatic agent,water-soluble colouring agent, micronutrient, flavoring agent or vitamin, comprising providing a pectin product according to any one of claims 28, 34, or 36, and encapsulating said easily volatile lipid, water-soluble aromatic agent, micronutrient, flavoring agent or vitamin in said pectin product.

41. **(Currently amended)** A pharmaceutical composition comprising the product according to claims 28 or 34 ~~any one of claims 28, 34 or 36~~.

42. **(Currently amended)** A viscosifying agent and/or an emulsifying agent comprising a product according to claims 28 or 34 ~~any one of claims 28, 34 or 36~~.

43. **(Currently amended)** A fat replacement or tobacco replacement comprising the product according to claims 28 or 34 ~~any one of claims 28, 34 or 36~~.